

FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

THE INDIANAPOLIS PROJECT SCHOOL

May 15-23, 2012

The Indianapolis Mayor's Office Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) is designed to assess the extent to which a school is meeting the standards for performance at the mid-point of its seven-year charter term. The FYCR Protocol is based on the Mayor's *Performance Framework*, which is used to determine a school's success relative to a common set of indicators, as well as school-based goals.

Consistent with the Performance Framework, the following core questions and sub-questions are examined to determine a school's success:

1. *Is the educational program a success?*

- 1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?*
- 1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time?*
- 1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?*
- 1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?*

2. *Is the organization effective and well-run?*

- 2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?*
- 2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?*
- 2.3. Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?*
- 2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?*
- 2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?*
- 2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?*

3. *Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?*

- 3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?*
- 3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?*
- 3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?*
- 3.4. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice?*
- 3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students?*

4. *Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?*

- 4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?*
- 4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?*
- 4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?*
- 4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?*
- 4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?*
- 4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?*
- 4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?*
- 4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?*

COMPLETION OF THE FOURTH YEAR CHARTER REVIEW

As part of its oversight of charter schools, the Mayor's Office requires schools to contract with an authorized site visit evaluator to conduct a site visit at the school. The purpose of the site visit is to present the school and the Mayor's Office with additional professional judgment on the conditions and practices at the school outlined within core question 4 of the Performance Framework. Research & Evaluation Resources (RER) was chosen by the school to conduct the site visit. The site visit uses multiple sources of evidence to understand the school's performance. Evidence collection begins before the visit with the review of key documents and continues on-site through additional document review, classroom visits and interviews with any number of stakeholders. Findings provided by the site visit team highlight what the school is doing well and any areas for improvement. The Mayor's Office compiles the results of the site visit with its internal analysis to finalize the Fourth Year Charter Review (FYCR) report.

The FYCR report provides the school with official ratings and supporting evidence for each question within the *Performance Framework* based on a rubric of indicators. The rating system utilizes the following judgments:

Does not meet standard

Approaching standard

Meets standard

Exceeds standard

Note: In the case of the sub-questions under **Core Question 3** and **Core Question 4** of the *Performance Framework*, there is no rating for *Exceeds standard*. *Meets standard* is the highest possible rating.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

THE INDIANAPOLIS PROJECT SCHOOL

Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?	FINDING
<i>1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress, as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>1.1. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>1.1. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>1.1. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?	FINDING
<i>2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>2.3. Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?</i>	Exceeds Standard
<i>2.5. Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?	FINDING
<i>3.1. Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational structure and governance obligations?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>3.4. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related to access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students?</i>	Not Evaluated
Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?	FINDING
<i>4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support and preparation for post-secondary options?</i>	Not Evaluated
<i>4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?</i>	Approaching Standard
<i>4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?</i>	Does Not Meet Standard
<i>4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?</i>	Meets Standard
<i>4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?</i>	Approaching Standard

FINDINGS, INDICATORS AND EVIDENCE

THE INDIANAPOLIS PROJECT SCHOOL

Core Question 1: Is the educational program a success?

1.1. Is the school making adequate yearly academic progress as measured by the Indiana Department of Education's system of accountability?	
Does not meet standard	School has met AYP in less than half of student subgroups for the last two consecutive years.
Approaching standard	School has met AYP in more than half of student subgroups for one of the last two years.
Meets standard	School has met AYP across all student subgroups for the last two years.
Exceeds standard	School has exceeded the AYP target in all student subgroups in at least one of the last two years.

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

The Project School (TPS) has not achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) toward statewide academic goals set by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE). According to the current language within the Performance Framework, TPS is Approaching Standard, as the school met AYP in more than half of its subgroups in one of the last two years. It should be noted that the school met AYP in attendance and participation rate targets. In no year that the school has received a rating has TPS met AYP in any performance subgroup indicating that students are performing below the expected performance level.

School's AYP History

Year	Made AYP	Number of Categories
2011-12	n/a	<i>Not applicable, AYP was not calculated for the 2012 school year</i>
2010-11	N	7 out of 13
2009-10	N	6 out of 13
2008-09	n/a	<i>Not applicable, AYP was not calculated for the 2009 school year</i>

Historic Subgroup Performance

2010-11	ELA		Math		Attendance
	Participation	Performance	Participation	Performance	
Overall					
Black					
Free/Reduced Lunch					
2009-10	ELA		Math		Attendance
	Participation	Performance	Participation	Performance	
Overall					
Black					
Free/Reduced Lunch					

In February 2012, the Indiana State Board of Education voted to approve a new A-F accountability system that would replace the existing Public Law 221 rating system and AYP determinations. The Indiana Department of Education estimated that using the metrics of the new system, **TPS would have received an ‘F’ during the 2010-11 school year** based on a combination of performance and growth on state standardized tests. The state has not yet released grade determinations for 2011-12, however given the school’s performance on ISTEP+ in 2012, it is highly improbable the school will receive a grade higher than ‘F’. In summary, the school achieved AYP in more than half of subgroups in one of the last two years. Therefore, the school receives an Approaching Standard for this indicator.

1.2. Are students making substantial and adequate gains over time?	
Does not meet standard	Value-added analysis indicates that less than 50% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Approaching standard	Value-added analysis indicates that 50%-74% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Meets standard	Value-added analysis indicates that more than 75%-89% of tested students made sufficient gains.
Exceeds standard	Value-added analysis indicates that at least 90% of tested students made sufficient gains.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

Analysis of student growth data over the first three years at TPS reveals that in no year did more than 50% of students achieve sufficient gains. This percentage does not meet the Mayor’s standard of at least 75% of students making sufficient gains.

Each of the school’s first two years, analysts examined the amount of progress that each student made on the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA)’s Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test between the fall and spring. Analysts then determined whether each student had made sufficient gains on the test to become proficient within two years, based on the amount of progress that the student made on the test between fall and spring.

In 2009-2010, the IDOE adopted the new Indiana Growth Model to assess individual growth of students within the state. The state compares each student’s growth on ISTEP+ from one year to the next and determines whether students made ‘Low Growth’, ‘Typical Growth’, or ‘High Growth’ compared to their academic peers. According to the IDOE, only 46% of students at TPS demonstrated either ‘Typical Growth’ or ‘High Growth’. This means that more than half of students at TPS demonstrated growth that was lower than their academic peers.

School’s Growth History

Year	Average Sufficient Gains
2008-2009	28%
2009-2010	36%
2010-2011	46%

TPS's students' growth under the Indiana Growth model can also be contextualized by the school's *Median Growth Percentile*. A school with a *Median Growth Percentile* of 50.0 would be a school whose students are on pace with their peers across the state. The below table demonstrates that the amount of academic growth of TPS students has consistently been far below the state average (50) in both English and mathematics. Additionally, TPS students have generally demonstrated a level of academic growth that is below that of students enrolled in Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS), the district in which TPS is located.

	2008-2009		2009-2010		2010-2011	
	TPS	IPS	TPS	IPS	TPS	IPS
English/Language Arts	28	37	47	42	37	40
Math	9	38	23	38	25	34

The state has not yet released Growth Model data for the 2011-2012 academic year, however based on the decline in proficiency rates on ISTEP+ from the 2010-2011 academic year, it is highly improbable that 75% of students at TPS demonstrated sufficient gains, nor that the *Median Growth Percentile* will be above 50.0

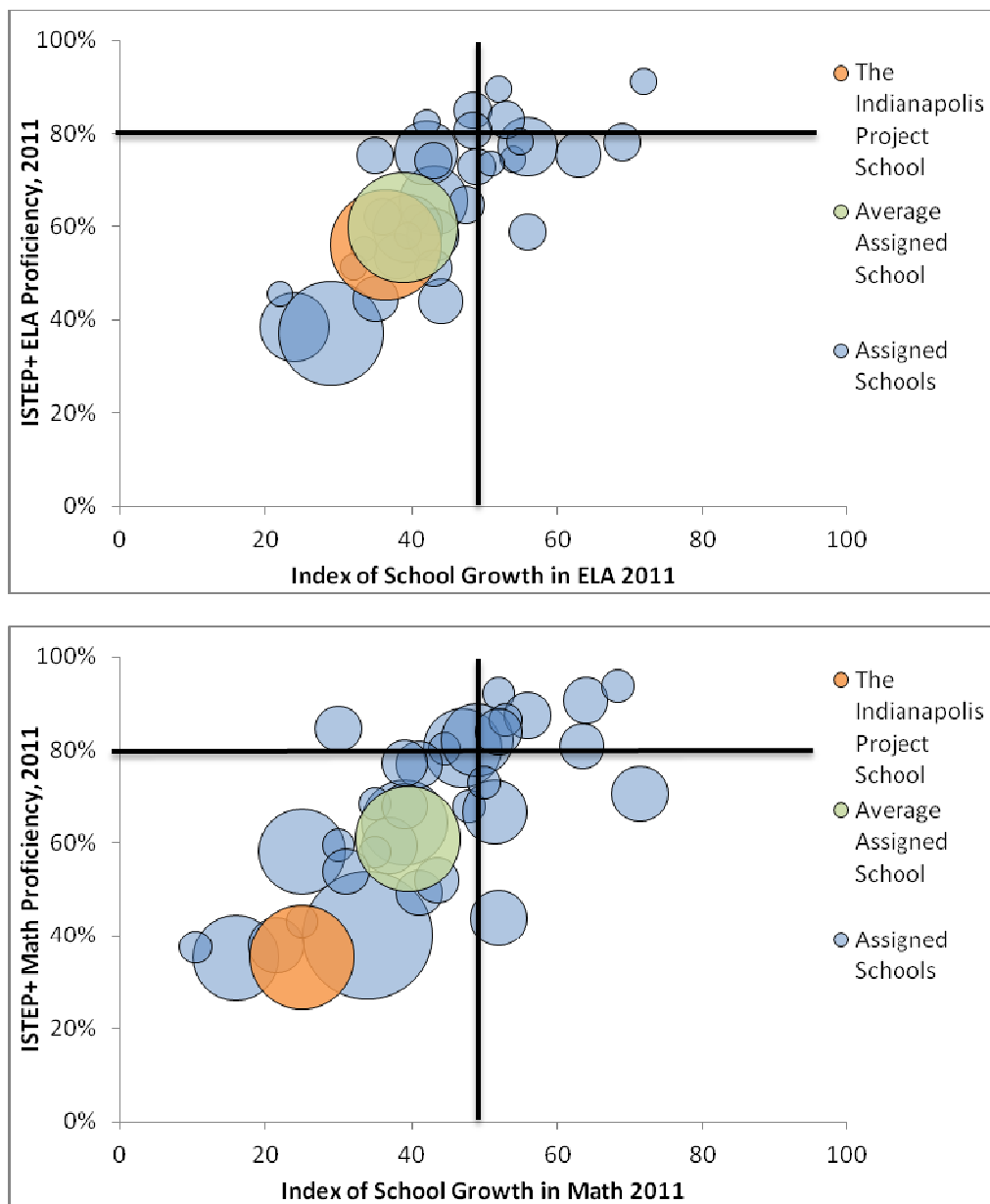
In summary, because data indicates that less than half of TPS students have demonstrated sufficient gains in each of its first three years, and because it is highly improbable that 75% of students will demonstrate sufficient gains in 2011-2012, the school does not meet the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

1.3. Is the school outperforming schools that the students would have been assigned to attend?	
Does not meet standard	School's overall performance in terms of proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in each of the last three years.
Approaching standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally lower than that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend in two of the last three years.
Meets standard	School's overall performance in terms of both proficiency and/or growth is generally as good as that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.
Exceeds standard	School's performance consistently outpaces that of the schools the students would otherwise have been assigned to attend.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

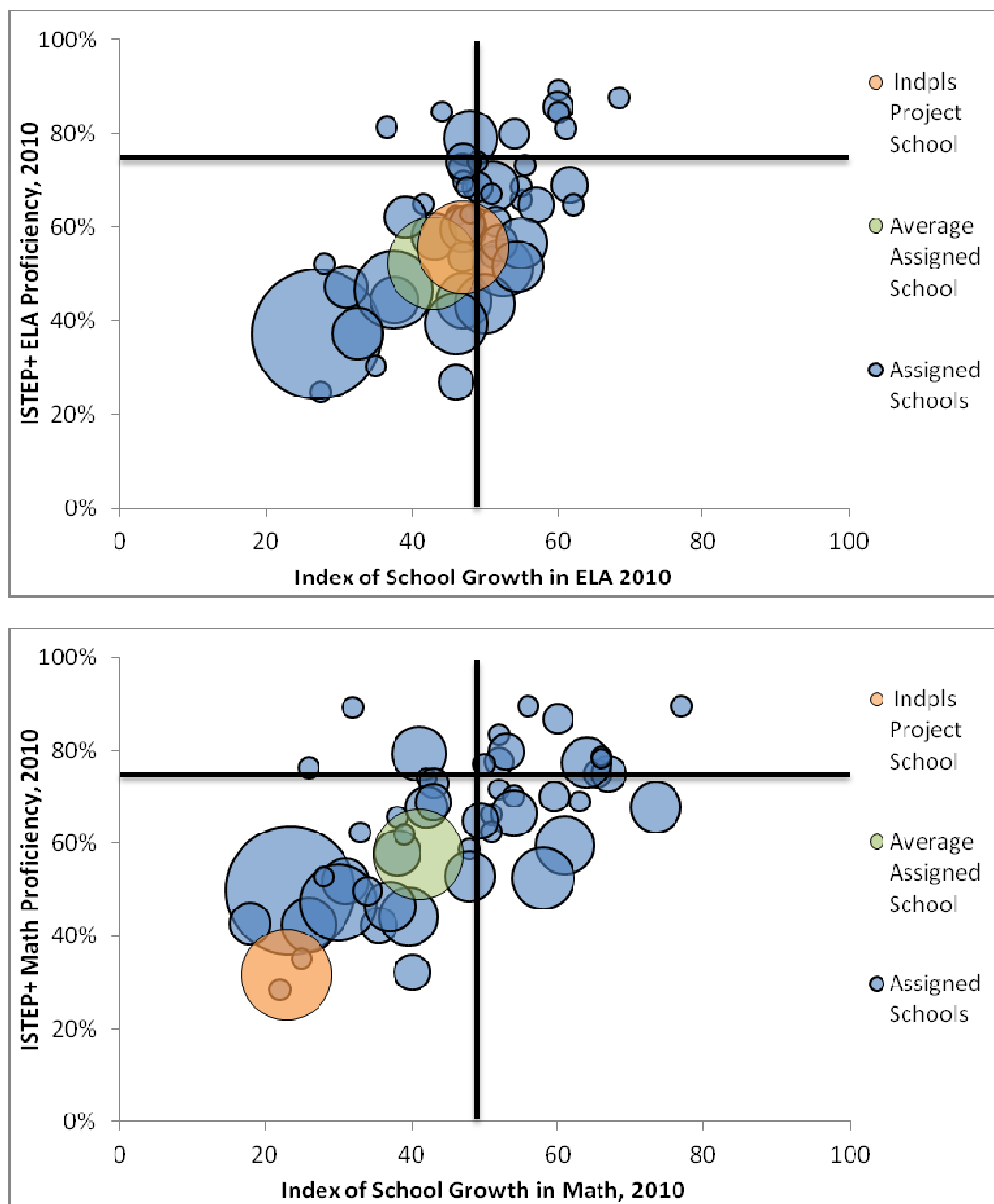
The Mayor's Office has conducted analysis of performance of TPS students to that of Marion County public schools TPS students would have been assigned to attend based on their place of residence for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic years. The analysis could not be conducted for 2008-2009, as it was the first year the school was in operation and thus growth data are not available.

In 2010-2011, both the overall proficiency and growth at TPS was lower than the average assigned school in both English and mathematics.



How to read these figures: Blue bubbles represent the traditional public school that students would have been assigned to attend if they did not attend TPS. The size of each blue bubble is proportional to the number of TPS students who would have attended that school. The horizontal axis line represents the average ISTEP+ performance in Indiana, while the vertical axis line represents 50th growth percentile. Schools located above the horizontal axis had better-than-average performance, while schools located to the right of the vertical axis showed, better-than-average improvement. The green bubble represents the average performance and improvement of all assigned schools. The orange bubble represents the performance of TPS students.

In 2009-2010, the overall proficiency and growth at TPS was significantly lower than that of the average assigned school in mathematics, but was slightly higher in English.



Growth data for the 2011-2012 academic year has not been released by the IDOE. However, given the school's proficiency rates on ISTEP+ in 2012, TPS ranks in the bottom 5% of all Marion County schools for the percent of students passing both ELA and Math (8th from the bottom out of 185 schools). The school ranks in the bottom 2% of schools statewide for the percent of students passing both ELA and Math (19th from the bottom out of 1,525 schools). This information makes it clear that TPS does not outperform schools students would have been assigned to attend. Thus, given the performance across the charter period, TPS does not meet the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

1.4. Is the school meeting its school-specific educational goals?	
Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific educational goals.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific educational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific educational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific educational goal.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard

According to its original charter application, The Indianapolis Project School (TPS) states that two primary academic goals are (1) each student reads, writes, and computes at or above grade level within the first 3 years at the school; and (2) each student makes no less than one year's academic growth each year as measured by standardized tests.

With regards to the first goal, data provided by the IDOE indicates that the majority of students who were enrolled in TPS for three years did not demonstrate the ability to read, write or compute at or above grade level as measured by ISTEP+. In 2010-2011, the school's third year of operation, only 18.2% of students who had been enrolled at TPS for three continuous years demonstrated proficiency on both English and mathematics portions of ISTEP+. In 2011-2012, only 36% of students who had been enrolled for three continuous years demonstrated proficiency on both. This falls significantly below TPS' goal that 'each' student enrolled for three years would demonstrate proficiency.

With regards to the second goal, as outlined in Indicator 1.2, the students at TPS have not demonstrated one year's (or sufficient) growth in any year of operation thus far. Therefore, the school is not meeting the second of its academic goals.

Additionally, TPS's charter states that its vision is to 'eliminate the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities on students success'. However, looking at ISTEP+ data, it is evident that minority students and students who qualify for free or reduced lunch (FRL) at TPS are achieving significantly lower rates of proficiency. The percent of students who passed both English and mathematics ISTEP+ examinations are listed in the chart below:

	Black	White	FRL	Non-FRL
2011-2012	16.3%	72.7%	13.5%	72.4%
2010-2011	19.3%	55.0%	20.2%	63.6%
2009-2010	19.0%	33.3%	15.5%	42.1%
2008-2009	8.7%	*	13.7%	20.0%

*The subgroup had fewer than ten students, and thus was not evaluated by the IDOE.

The chart above demonstrates the TPS has increased considerably the percent of White and Non-FRL students who were proficient on ISTEP+. However, the percent of Black and FRL students have not improved significantly. Based on this information, TPS is clearly not achieving their goal of eliminating the predictive value of race or socioeconomic status for these students.

Core Question 2: Is the organization effective and well-run?

2.1. Is the school in sound fiscal health?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents concerns in <u>three or more</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one or two</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement.
Meets standard	The school presents significant concerns in no more than <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) its state financial audits (e.g., presence of “significant findings”); b) its financial staffing and systems; c) its success in achieving a balanced budget over the past three years; d) the adequacy of its projections of revenues and expenses for the next three years; e) its fulfillment of financial reporting requirements under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. In addition, if the school presents significant concerns in one area, it has a credible plan for addressing the concern that has been approved by the Mayor’s Office.
Exceeds standard	The school demonstrates satisfactory performance in all of the areas listed in previous levels.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

The Indiana State Board of Accounts (“SBOA”) examined the school’s finances for the time period of July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2010. The SBOA examination concluded that significant deficiencies and material weaknesses existed in the Project School’s management of Federal Grant dollars. According to the examination, during the period the examination took place, the school improperly administered the Federal Planning and Implementation grant. The school was not appropriately administering the Federal awards in a timely manner, allowing these restricted funds to accumulate rather than be allocated monthly to cover expenditures. Additionally, the school was using restricted funds from both the Federal Charter School Facilities fund and the Federal Planning and Implementation grant to cover unauthorized operating expenditures, including salary and compensation. The total amount of restricted funds used improperly was \$63,551. Additionally, SBOA found that the school’s General Fund was overdrawn on June 30, 2010 by \$224,059.

The SBOA report also found that the school has not implemented internal controls to ensure that funds are properly administered. SBOA recommended the school work with the IDOE to adopt more efficient controls to ensure compliance with Federal and State law. Through ongoing oversight of the school, the Mayor’s Office has also found that the school is ineffectively managing business operations and that internal controls are lacking. The school has struggled to assign a dedicated staff person tasked with the management of funds at the school. In 2011, the school hired a Chief Financial Officer to perform these functions; however this individual left the school after three months.

The Project School has not maintained an adequate cash balance in their checking or savings accounts, leaving the school with little to no cash on hand to fund unanticipated expenses or general operating expenses, such as payroll. This was recently evidenced in July, 2012 when the school had to delay payroll by one week in order to pay current obligations (i.e. mortgage, insurance, etc.). The Mayor’s

Office analyzed the school's finances for the 2010-2011 fiscal year, and when total expenses are subtracted from available cash, and then divided by 365 days, the school had less than one day (0.34) of cash in their bank account to fund expenses. As of June 30, 2012, this had increased to 1.25 days of cash in reserve. Best practice and industry standard indicate that the school should have between 30-60 days cash on hand.

The school has also failed to meet enrollment targets as specified within their charter agreement in every year of operation. This failure to meet targets has left the school in a tenuous financial position, as the revenue is based on the number to students enrolled. Across the past three fiscal years, the school has failed to achieve a balanced budget, with expenditures exceeding revenue every year. According to an outside accounting firm contracted by the Mayor's Office to assess the school's financial health, the school's expenditures exceeded revenue by \$1.55 million in 2010-2011. The school was able to supplement expenditures by accruing significant new debt. Additionally, the balance statements from 2009-2010 and 2011-2012 demonstrate that the school's expenses exceeded revenue by over \$150,000 and \$90,000 respectively.

In order to fund operational expenses, the school has continued to accrue loans and lines of credit. According to balance statements provided by the school, total liabilities in 2010 were \$2,264,713; in 2011, increased to \$5,170,847; and in 2012 increased to \$5,280,427. In contrast, the total revenue in 2010 was \$2,693,331; in 2011 it was \$2,942,938; and in 2012 it was \$3,203,022. This means that in two years, the school accrued over \$3 million in new debt, but only increased revenue by roughly \$500,000. When calculating the debt to asset ratio for the school, the total debt as of June 30, 2012 (\$5,280,427) is perilously close to meeting the school's total assets (\$5,404,569). This represents a margin of less than 2%. Best practice indicates that at a minimum, a 10% margin should exist between debt and total assets.

The school has fulfilled requirements to submit financial reporting documents under Sections 10 and 17 of the charter agreement. However, the school has presented concerns related to state financial audits, its financial staffing and systems, its success in achieving a balanced budget over three years, and the adequacy of its projections of revenue and expenditures. To date, the school does not have a credible plan for addressing the issues. Thus, the school does not meet the Mayor's standard for this Indicator.

2.2. Are the school's student enrollment, attendance, and retention rates strong?	
Does not meet standard	The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>10% or more</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
Approaching standard	The school's actual enrollment consistently falls short of target enrollment by <u>1-9%</u> . Student attendance and retention rates are consistently below the school's agreed-upon target rates.
Meets standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates are generally at or above the school's agreed-upon target rates.
Exceeds standard	The school is consistently fully enrolled. Student attendance and retention rates consistently exceed the school's agreed-upon target rates.

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

In each of year of operation, TPS has failed to meet enrollment targets established within the charter agreement, according to data provided by the Indiana Department of Education. In 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, the school fell short by over 10% of the target.

School Year	Target Enrollment	Fall Enrollment	Percent Below
2008-2009	175	167	4.5%
2009-2010	220	181	17.7%
2010-2011	300	268	10.7%
2011-2012	325	311	4.4%
Total	1020	927	9.1%

Source: Target Enrollment data are from the school's charter. Fall Enrollment data are from the Indiana Department of Education.

Attendance rates at TPS have been at or near the state performance target of 95%, with the exception of 2009-2010. Attendance for 2011-2012 have not yet been released.

School Year	Attendance Rate
2008-2009	95.1%
2009-2010	94.1%
2010-2011	95.3%
2011-2012	96.1%

Source: Indiana Department of Education.

No targets have been established for student retention rates for TPS. Retention rates at the school have increased each year. Most recently, 72.5% of the students enrolled in 2010-2011 returned in the fall of 2012.

Years	Students Enrolled Initial Year	Students Re-enrolled Following Year	Retention Rate
Fall 2008 to Fall 2009	174	98	56.3%
Fall 2009 to Fall 2010	184	122	66.3%
Fall 2010 to Fall 2011	258	187	72.5%

Source: Mayor's office analysis of fall enrollment reports submitted by the school.

While the school has increased retention each year and had demonstrated attendance at or near the state's minimum expectation, enrollment has fallen short of targets each year. When averaged across years, the school has fallen short of enrollment targets by 9.1%. This approaches the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

2.3 Is the school's board active and competent in its oversight?	
Does not meet standard	The school's board presents concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the board does not contribute a broad skill set and/or is not reflective of the community; b) is not knowledgeable about the school and/or is unable to make decisions in a timely fashion; c) has policies or by-laws that are not consistently followed, regularly reviewed, and/or do not include clearly defined roles and responsibilities for members; d) fails to achieve quorum or adhere to Indiana's Open Door Law; e) does not record meeting minutes that are thorough, accurate or transparent; f) does not regularly conduct a formal evaluation of the school against established academic, financial and operational performance goals; or g) does not have a written plan for the succession of leadership.
Approaching standard	The school's board is lacking <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the board does not contribute a broad skill set and/or is not reflective of the community; b) is not knowledgeable about the school and/or is unable to make decisions in a timely fashion; c) has policies or by-laws that are not consistently followed, regularly reviewed, and/or do not include clearly defined roles and responsibilities for members; d) fails to achieve quorum or adhere to Indiana's Open Door Law; e) does not record meeting minutes that are thorough, accurate or transparent; f) does not regularly conduct a formal evaluation of the school against established academic, financial and operational performance goals; or g) does not have a written plan for the succession of leadership.
Meets standard	The school's board a) contributes a broad skill set and is reflective of the community; b) is knowledgeable about the school and able to make decisions in a timely fashion; c) has policies and by-laws that are consistently followed, regularly reviewed, and include clearly defined roles and responsibilities for members; d) consistently achieves quorum and adheres to Indiana's Open Door Law; e) records meeting minutes that are thorough, accurate and transparent; f) regularly conducts a formal evaluation of the school against established academic, financial and operational performance goals; and g) has a written plan for the succession of leadership.
Exceeds standard	The board has consistently met this standard, as evidenced by exceptional stewardship and governance over time.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

The Indianapolis Project School (TPS) Board is knowledgeable about the school. Its membership reflected a broad skill set and is relatively representative of the community, achieving quorum at board meetings has been consistent, and the thoroughness of meeting minutes has improved. However, the TPS board has not developed a process for institutionalizing governance practices through formal policies, has not yet fully implemented the board committee structure as outlined in its by-laws, has not created a formal evaluation of the school against established academic, financial, and operational performance goals, and does not have a written plan for the succession of leadership.

The Board has been representative of the community and has contributed expertise throughout the schools four years of operation. Board membership has consistently met minimum numbers specified in the by-laws. However, the school's board has experienced unanticipated turnover outside of term limits. Members have had varied skill sets and varied backgrounds, including representatives from business, development, fundraising, and higher education. However, representation of members who contribute varying skill sets is not always consistent.

Throughout its four years of operation the board has consistently posted notice of meetings via the web and has improved posting notice in high traffic areas of the school per Open Door Law. The TPS Board has been active in its stewardship to the school but lacked functioning subcommittees, as outlined in its by-laws, until its third year of operation, inhibiting the development of clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the board.

The TPS Board has yet to develop or conduct formal evaluations of the school or its leadership against established academic, financial, and operational performance goals. The Board engages in conversations around these areas during meetings, however, no goals have been established to hold the school or its administration accountable. It is unclear how the Board defines success or whether it has a process for holding the school accountable for performance in relation to the Mayor's Performance Framework or to the goals articulated in its charter. The relationship of some of the members of the Board to the school's leader could also contribute to the Board's inability to develop effective means for holding the leader accountable. Two of the members are employees at the school who report directly to the school leader. The Board chair is the principal of another charter school, of which TPS's leader is the Board chair. In addition, the board has no written succession plan for leadership.

With the exception of fiscal policies, the TPS Board has not developed a process for institutionalizing governance practices through the adoption of formal policies. It is clear the Board engages in discussions around fiscal, operational, and academic areas of the school, however it is unclear if formal governance practices have been developed. It is also unclear if the Board has revisited its fiscal oversight policies since the school's first year. To date, no policies outside of financial oversight have been submitted to the Mayor's Office.

In summary, while the Board is deeply passionate about the mission of TPS, they have yet to adopt formal policies, hold the school or its administration accountable, or clearly delineate roles or responsibilities. Accordingly, the school does not meet standard for this indicator.

2.4. Is there a high level of parent satisfaction with the school?	
Does not meet standard	Less than 70% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Approaching standard	More than 70% but less than 80% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Meets standard	More than 80% but less than 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.
Exceeds standard	At least 90% of parents surveyed indicate that they are satisfied overall with the school.

FYCR Rating: Exceeds Standard.

The school has demonstrated a high level of parent satisfaction over time. The number of respondents has been low, however those parents who have returned a survey have reported being satisfied with the school overall. When weighted across the years by respondents, an average of 91.5% of those parents who returned a survey were satisfied. This exceeds the Mayor's standard of 80%.

School Year	Percent Satisfied	Number of Respondents
2008-2009	94%	33
2009-2010	87%	39
2010-2011	97%	38
2011-2012	90%	82
Weighted Average	91.5%	

Note: "Percent Satisfied" includes "very satisfied" and "somewhat satisfied" responses which were on a five-point scale that also included "satisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied", and "very dissatisfied".

Source: Confidential survey results administered by, Indiana University (2008 through 2010), and Research and Evaluation Resources (2011 and 2012).

2.5 Is the school administration strong in its academic and organizational leadership?	
Does not meet standard	The school's administration is lacking <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) leadership does not have sufficient academic or organizational expertise; b) has not been sufficiently stable over time; c) does not have clearly defined roles or responsibilities among administrators; d) does not actively engage in a process of continuous improvement or mid-course corrections; e) has not established high expectations for all stakeholders – staff, students, and parents; f) has not organized operations or secured necessary resources to effectively implement the mission of the school; g) does not ensure the school achieves strong academic and operational performance; or h) has not developed a plan for succession for administrators and staff.
Approaching standard	The school's administration is lacking <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) leadership does not have sufficient academic or organizational expertise; b) has not been sufficiently stable over time; c) does not have clearly defined roles or responsibilities among administrators; d) does not actively engage in a process of continuous improvement or mid-course corrections; e) has not established high expectations for all stakeholders – staff, students, and parents; f) has not organized operations or secured necessary resources to effectively implement the mission of the school; g) does not ensure the school achieves strong academic and operational performance; or h) has not developed a plan for succession for administrators and staff.
Meets standard	The school's administration a) has sufficient academic and organizational expertise; b) has been sufficiently stable over time; c) has clearly defined roles and responsibilities among administrators; d) actively engages in a process of continuous improvement and mid-course corrections; e) has established high expectations for all stakeholders – staff, students, and parents; f) has organized operations and secured necessary resources to effectively implement the mission of the school; g) ensures the school achieves strong academic and operational performance; and h) has developed a plan for succession for administrators and staff.
Exceeds standard	The school's administration has consistently met this standard, as evidenced by exceptional performance over time.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

The Indianapolis Project School (TPS) administration has sufficient academic experience, has remained stable over time, has engaged in some continuous improvement, and has established expectations for all stakeholders. However, the school's administration does not have clearly defined roles and

responsibilities for all administrators, does not ensure the school achieves strong academic and operational performance, has not organized operations or secured the necessary resources to effectively implement the mission of the school, and has not developed a plan for succession for administrators and staff.

The TPS leadership team consists of the school leader, K-3 lead teacher, and 4-8 lead teacher. The roles and responsibilities of the administration are not clearly delineated and are not organized in a way that allows staff to effectively implement the mission of the school. The school leader, for example, has taken responsibility for and oversight of a substantial proportion of school operations. In addition to providing accountability of the school, the leader also manages school finances, discipline, communication, public relations, human resources, fundraising, instructional coaching and support, maintenance of the facility and grounds, student support services, family relations, and he also teaches mathematics. The lead teachers oversee curriculum, special education, teacher observation, Title I, and also teach courses. The current lack of delineation often leads to disorganization, delays in communication, and an overall ineffectiveness in school operations. In the school's first and second years of operation, the Mayor's external site team noted the abundance of responsibilities which fell to the school leader, and encouraged the school to look at delegating more responsibilities to other staff. In the school's third year self-evaluation, TPS reported that the leadership team had been expanded from one to four. It was also noted that the four administrators teach classes and manage multiple functions. In the school's most recent site visit, evaluators noted that the school's administration is dedicated and mission driven, however unanticipated mid-course corrections often put additional strain on staff and increase capacity issues in order to implement needed changes effectively.

TPS has a teaching structure which consists of licensed teaching assistants, lead teachers, and master teachers. This structure is conducive to development for succession of the school's administration. It is unclear; however, if there is a formalized succession plan in place.

In addition, TPS recognized deficiencies in its financial capacity and hired a CFO for its fourth year of operation. However, the CFO resigned after three months and the financial responsibility of the school fell again on the school leader, aligning with consistent findings of maximized capacity inhibiting the school leader's ability to organize operations necessary to effectively implement mid-course changes. As outlined in Indicator 2.1, the financial management systems at the school clearly demonstrate that the school administration is not effectively managing this area of operation.

Finally, the school administration is not ensuring that the school achieves strong academic performance, as evidenced in Indicators 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4. According to the most recent site visit, the administration - both school leader and lead teachers - are not utilizing data such as Acuity, NWEA, or ISTEP+ to drive instruction or improve academic performance of students. Accordingly, the school Does Not Meet Standard for this indicator.

2.6. Is the school meeting its school-specific organizational and management performance goals?	
Does not meet standard	School has clearly not met its school-specific organizational goal.
Approaching standard	School is making good progress toward meeting its school-specific organizational goal.
Meets standard	School has clearly met its school-specific organizational goal.
Exceeds standard	School has clearly exceeded its school-specific organizational goal.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

According to the charter agreement, TPS has the organizational goal of having ‘a highly engaged governing board and advisory councils to ensure the school’s long-term viability and success’, with success to be measured by attendance at meetings, minutes, and ‘the maintenance of a balanced school budget and the development and implementation of a long-term fundraising plan’. As outlined in Indicator 2.1, the school has failed to achieve a balanced budget and is near financial insolvency. Additionally, to date, no long-term fundraising plan has been implemented at the school. Therefore, the school has clearly not met its organizational goal.

Core Question 3: Is the school meeting its operations and access obligations?

3.1 Has the school satisfactorily completed all of its organizational and governance obligations?	
Does not meet standard	School presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following organizational and governance obligations with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) does not maintain an adequate compliance binder containing all required documents; b) does not complete national criminal background checks on all staff and board members; c) meetings and/or decision-making is not transparent or is not in accordance with State law; d) does not maintain adequate board minutes; or e) does not submit all required reporting documents to regulatory bodies in a timely fashion.
Approaching standard	School presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following organizational and governance obligations with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) does not maintain an adequate compliance binder containing all required documents; b) does not complete national criminal background checks on all staff and board members; c) meetings and/or decision-making is not transparent or is not in accordance with State law; d) does not maintain adequate board minutes; or e) does not submit all required reporting documents to regulatory bodies in a timely fashion.
Meets standard	School has substantially completed all of its organizational and governance obligations, including: a) maintenance of adequate compliance binder containing all required documents; b) completion of national criminal background checks on all staff and board members; c) transparency of meetings and decision-making in accordance with State law; d) maintenance of adequate board minutes; and e) timely submission of all required reporting documents to regulatory bodies.

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

Indianapolis Project School (TPS) did not consistently meet its organizational and governance obligations as specified in the Compliance and Governance Handbook in the first four years of its operation. TPS was chronically late in submitting required documents to the Mayor’s Office, as specified in the Master Calendar of Reporting Requirements. Although the school has improved in their compliance, delinquency on items remain. Necessary evidence demonstrating that staff members were appropriately licensed is not always available in a timely fashion, and delinquency on financial compliance documents has increased in the last two years of its operation.

TPS routinely documents that background checks are conducted for all board members and complies with public access and open door policy by posting notices of board meetings. Board meeting minutes are always kept and have been sent to the Mayor's Office in a timely manner. The minutes of board meetings reflect discussions of a diverse range of school issues; however adequate detail regarding discussions, deliberations, and decisions is sometimes lacking. Therefore, the school is Approaching Standard for this indicator.

3.2. Is the school's physical plant safe and conducive to learning?	
Does not meet standard	The facility requires <u>much</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Significant health and safety code requirements have not been met AND/OR the school <u>lacks</u> many conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; adequate maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.
Approaching standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met, but the facility needs <u>some</u> improvement in order to provide a safe environment that is conducive to learning. It <u>partially</u> – but not fully – provides conditions such as the following: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.
Meets standard	Significant health and safety code requirements are being met AND the facility generally provides a safe environment that is conducive to learning, based on conditions such as: a design well-suited to meet the curricular and social needs of its students, faculty, and community members; a size appropriate for the enrollment and student-teacher ratios in each class; good maintenance and security; well-maintained equipment and furniture that match the educational needs of the students; and accessibility to all students.

FYCR Rating: Meets Standard.

The Project School facility meets all the health and safety code requirements and provides a safe environment conducive to learning. The facility's design, size, maintenance, security, equipment, and furniture are all adequate to meet the school's needs. The school is accessible to all including people with physical disabilities. Accordingly, the school is placed in the Meets Standard category for this indicator.

3.3. Has the school established and implemented a fair and appropriate pupil enrollment process?	
Does not meet standard	The school's enrollment process does not comply with applicable law AND/OR the school exhibits one or both of the following deficiencies a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Approaching standard	The school's enrollment process complies with applicable law but exhibits one or both the following deficiencies: a) a substantial number of documented parent complaints suggest that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; b) the school has not engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.
Meets standard	The school's enrollment process complies with applicable law; there are minimal documented parent complaints suggesting that it is not being implemented fairly or appropriately; AND the school has engaged in outreach to students throughout the community.

FYCR Rating: Meets Standard.

The admission and enrollment practices of TPS meet the requirements of Indiana's charter school law. The Mayor's Office has received no complaints from parents regarding the school's enrollment practices. The school conducts extensive outreach to parents, including advertisement, community fairs, a website, and yard signs throughout the community. The Mayor's Office receives copies of TPS's enrollment policies and marketing plans. The school has implemented a lottery system and gives preference to siblings of current students, as required by law. Therefore, the school is placed in the Meets Standard category for this indicator.

3.4. Do the school's special education files demonstrate that it is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice?	
Does not meet standard	The school is not fulfilling its legal obligations regarding proper maintenance of special needs students' files, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve compliance such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences. A school does not meet the standard if any individual education plans have not been updated within the appropriate timeframe.
Approaching standard	The school is not yet completely fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding proper maintenance of special-needs students' files, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding special-needs students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: individualized education plans are up-to-date, student evaluations or re-evaluations have occurred within the appropriate timeframe, files contain the relevant required information, such as, file log sheet, parent consent form, documentation of case conference notification to parents and other conference participants and signatures of attendees at case conferences.

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

In order to assess the school's performance in relation to this indicator, the Mayor's Office required the school to contract with an external evaluator to conduct a thorough examination of special education practices. The on-site evaluation took place In May, 2012.

In general, the evaluators found that special education teachers and general education teachers worked well with one another, collaborating frequently. Parents and students reported satisfaction with services received. Staff were knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.

A review of special education files revealed that most were well written and were in general compliant with state and Federal special education law. Additionally, the Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) included evidence that progress towards goals and proficiency are being monitored regularly. Some

files did present issues with regard to appropriate notification of parents when case conferences were to occur.

The review of IEPs demonstrated that the educational plans aligned with the individual needs of children and included state and national learning standards. Goals within IEPs were well-defined and advanced as the students' abilities progressed. In one file, however, goals were copied from an older IEP without update or modification. Additionally, one file was found to not have a current IEP.

While the school has demonstrated evidence of effectiveness and most files indicate the school is in legal compliance and is moving towards best practice, some files were missing key elements or needed some improvement. Thus, the school is approaching the Mayor's Standard for this indicator.

3.5. Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations related To access and services to English as a Second Language (ESL) students?	
Does not meet standard	The school is <u>not</u> fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires substantial improvement in order to achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Approaching standard	The school is <u>not yet completely</u> fulfilling all of its legal obligations regarding ESL students, and requires <i>some</i> (but not considerable) improvement to fully achieve conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.
Meets standard	The school is fulfilling its legal obligations regarding ESL students, as indicated by conditions such as the following: appropriate staff have a clear understanding of current legislation, research and effective practices relating to the provision of ESL services; relationships with students, parents, and external providers that are well-managed and comply with law and regulation.

Not Applicable. The school does not serve a significant proportion of ESL students. Thus, this Indicator was not evaluated.

Core Question 4: Is the school providing the appropriate conditions for success?

4.1. Does the school have a high-quality curriculum and supporting materials for each grade?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum does not align with the state standards; b) the school does not conduct systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school does not regularly review scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) the sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas does not focus on core (prioritized) learning objectives; e) the staff lacks understanding and/or consensus as to how the curriculum documents and related program materials are used to effectively deliver instruction; f) there is a lack of programs and materials available to deliver the curriculum effectively.

Meets standard	The school: a) curriculum aligns with the state standards; b) conducts systematic reviews of its curriculum to identify gaps based on student performance; c) the school regularly reviews scope and sequence to ensure presentation of content in time for testing; d) has a sequence of topics across grade levels and content areas that is prioritized and focuses on the core learning objectives; e) the staff understands and uniformly uses curriculum documents and related program materials to effectively deliver instruction; f) programs and materials are available to deliver the curriculum effectively.
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FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

In order to assess the performance of the school in relation to each question under Core Question 4, the Mayor's Office required the school to contract with an external evaluator to conduct an extensive site visit in May of 2012. The evaluators found that in relation to Indicator 4.1, the school does not have a high quality curriculum. Specifically, the school's curriculum maps do not consistently align to state standards; the school is not conducting systematic reviews of scope and sequence to ensure the presentation of content in time for testing; curriculum documents are not being used uniformly and are not understood by all staff.

Evaluators found that scope and sequence documents presented were high-quality and that teachers are knowledgeable and skilled at writing lesson plans. Evidence suggests the school has a logical sequence with learning objectives included. While the scope and sequence documents were well designed, there was no evidence that the sequence was designed to ensure presentation of content in time for state testing, such as Acuity or ISTEP+.

The evaluators could find no evidence that regular meetings occur throughout the year to perform curricular reviews or to review data in order to prepare students for testing. The teaching staff also noted that there is a great deal of informal communication about students' needs. However, no evidence could be found to suggest the existence of formal curricular meetings, such as weekly team meetings, grade level team meetings, or subject team meetings for staff to discuss vertical and horizontal alignment and integration between and across grades.

Finally, evaluators found there is a lack of effective math curriculum or supplemental materials. Focus groups with teachers demonstrated to evaluators that within the areas of mathematics and social studies, the staff do not uniformly use curricular documents or related materials. In the area of mathematics, the curriculum is not being uniformly used across classrooms. Some teachers noted that they are unaware of what their colleagues are different grades are using in their math classes. When asked about the mathematics curriculum, leadership and teaching staff indicated they did not know of any mathematics program that would be a better fit for TPS.

In summary, evaluators found a number of concerns regarding the curriculum and supporting materials within TPS. Therefore, the school does not meet the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

4.2. Are the teaching processes (pedagogies) consistent with the school's mission?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.

Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the curriculum is not implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is not focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery lacks the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities lack variety and/or limited use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) staff do not receive feedback on instructional practices.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the curriculum is implemented in the majority of classrooms according to its design; b) as delivered, instruction is focused on core learning objectives; c) the pace of instruction/lessons and content delivery possesses the appropriate rigor and challenge; d) instructional activities possess variety and/or use of differentiated strategies to engage a wide range of student interests, abilities and learning needs; e) supplies sufficient feedback to staff on instructional practices.

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

Evaluators found that teachers have become experts in delivering the workshop model of instruction and regularly implement the curriculum as designed. Additionally, the evaluators found that instruction is focused on core learning objectives in the majority of classrooms. Evaluators noted the excellent level of instruction being provided by the teaching staff.

Evaluators found that the majority of classrooms included rigorous instruction based on the workshop model. However, evaluators found that there are students for whom the rigor of the workshops is far beyond their capabilities because they are several grade levels behind in reading, writing, and mathematics. Evaluators noted that intensive remediation and differentiation were necessary in order to prepare these students for success within the workshop model. In response to the need for remediation, TPS has hired one full-time staff person to provide remediation for the school. However, given the size of the school and pervasiveness of the workshop model, it is not clear whether instruction is being appropriately differentiated.

The evaluators found that the school's leader and two lead teachers were knowledgeable about the model and were available to provide feedback and support to staff. While feedback does exist, most of it was found to be informal and unofficial. Consequently, some teachers have missed important information regarding professional development.

In summary, while the school is clearly demonstrating strengths in the the area of instruction, the school must work to provide more differentiated remediation to students who are behind grade level and are not yet ready for the workshop model. Additionally, staff would benefit from a more formalized, structured process for feedback on instructional practices. Thus, the school is approaching the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

4.3. For secondary students, does the school provide sufficient guidance on and support preparation for post-secondary options?

Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
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Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) the school's academic program lacks challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) lack of high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) insufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) limited opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) the school does not meet Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.
Meets standard	The school: a) has challenging coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement courses, internships, independent study) to prepare students for rigorous post-secondary opportunities; b) has high expectations to motivate and prepare students for post-secondary academic opportunities; c) has sufficient material resources and personnel guidance available to inform students of post-secondary options; d) presents opportunities for extracurricular engagement and activities (e.g., athletics, academic clubs, vocational) to increase post-secondary options; e) meets or exceeds Indiana Core 40 graduation standard requirements.

Not Evaluated. The Indianapolis Project School (TPS) did not serve secondary students in its first four years of operation.

4.4. Does the school effectively use learning standards and assessments to inform and improve instruction?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are not accurate or useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are not received by classroom teachers in a timely or useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments lack sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is limited frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are not used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.
Meets standard	The school: a) standardized and/or classroom assessments are accurate and useful measures of established learning standards/objectives; b) assessment results are received by classroom teachers in a timely and useful manner to influence instructional decisions; c) assessments have sufficient variety to guide instruction for a wide range of student learning abilities; d) there is sufficient frequency or use of assessments to inform instructional decisions effectively; e) assessment results are used to guide instruction or make adjustments to curriculum.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

According to evaluators, the majority of assessments implemented by TPS are designed specifically for the workshop model implemented in classrooms. The TPS assessments are used frequently to inform instructional decision-making. Evaluators expressed concerns not with the frequency of the assessments or the ability of staff to use data to guide instruction; rather, the evaluators found that the majority of assessments performed are designed to assess student growth in the foundational skills necessary for workshop models and project-based learning. Skills outside those valued by the workshop model are not regularly assessed and student data is not available on any other skills. Additionally, evaluators found that assessments in mathematics are informal and are not as comprehensive as those used in

reading and writing. Data from these assessments does not appear to be used to systematically review the curriculum.

Evaluators found that data from state tests, such as Acuity or ISTEP+, is quickly analyzed and provided to teachers, however when asked during focus groups, staff conveyed they do not use Acuity or ISTEP+ data to modify lesson plans or provide additional remediation to students. According to evaluators, ‘it did become very clear during interviews with staff that there was very little use for standardized test results in daily instruction’.

According to evaluators, it also does appear that data from internal assessments or from state tests are part of curricular reviews. The leadership and staff do not conduct reviews of the curriculum to identify gaps in a systematic way that will impact the overall quality of instruction. Rather, the focus of TPS is to use data to address the individual needs of children. Further, data from state tests is not being used to design professional development. Most notably, according to evaluators, there is a consistent lack of professional development offer in mathematics instruction, despite the school’s disappointing results in both growth and proficiency.

In summary, the school is not thoroughly using assessments to guide instruction, particularly in mathematics. Additionally, the school is not using data from state tests to influence instructional decisions effectively. Finally, assessments are not being used to make adjustments to the curriculum. Thus, the school does not meet the Mayor’s standard for this indicator.

4.5. Has the school developed adequate human resource systems and deployed its staff effectively?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) hiring processes are not organized to support the success of new staff members; b) inefficient or insufficient deployment of faculty and staff limits instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are not certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) does not relate to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD is not determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is not explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) hiring processes are organized and used to support the success of new staff members; b) the school deploys sufficient number of faculty and staff to maximize instructional time and capacity; c) faculty and staff are certified/trained in areas to which they are assigned; d) professional development (PD) is related to demonstrated needs for instructional improvement; e) PD opportunities are determined through analyses of student attainment and improvement; f) the teacher evaluation plan is explicit and regularly implemented with a clear process and criteria.

FYCR Rating: Does Not Meet Standard.

Evaluators found that hiring processes at TPS are organized, however support for new staff members is informal. Additionally, evidence suggests that all staff members at TPS are licensed appropriately for the areas they are assigned. Staff at TPS are considered equal partners and report feeling comfortable with school leaders and with their colleagues. Evaluators found that school leadership, teachers, and support staff are incredibly dedicated to the mission of the school and to the students they serve.

Evaluators found that staff at the school are working at or near capacity. Additionally, as new programs are implemented, new staff are added. However, the additional staff are not sufficient to implement the new programs effectively. An example cited by the evaluators was the transitional education class offered for middle school students who are chronically disruptive. The classroom has been effective for the students assigned to it, however it is currently being staffed by a special education teacher, who also carries a full caseload. The school has also hired a part-time mental health counselor to work with disruptive students, but given the pervasive need, evaluators cited that a full-time staff person would more effectively meet the level of need. Evaluators also found that ‘many students desperately need remediation’ in order to be successful in the workshop model. The school hired a full-time remediation coach, however given the size and scope of need, one staff is not an effective allocation of resources.

TPS employs three special education teachers. This should be more than adequate, given the size and needs of their special education population. However, many staff indicated this was not adequate. Teachers expressed concern that special education teachers are not being utilized appropriately and are not receiving adequate administrative support or professional development. Many times, special education staff are required to support students without IEPs. Special education teachers reported feeling ‘stretched too thin’, as a large part of their time is spent supplementing non-special education related services, such as lunch duty, I-READ 3 intervention, playground monitoring, and student discipline.

Teacher evaluation at the school is not explicit and is not implemented with a clear, regular process. During focus groups, staff indicated to evaluators that they do not receive enough feedback from school leadership regarding instructional practices and would like more classroom observations followed by a formal debrief. When asked if they had been formally observed by leadership, many staff reported to evaluators that they had not been observed in 2011-2012, and several reported that it had been more than two years since they’d been observed.

Finally, the staff expressed concern regarding the use of ‘Passions’ classes. These classes take up the last hour of the instructional day, and allow students to engage in an activity they are passionate about. Teachers expressed to evaluators they would like to use this time for instruction and that preparing lessons for Passions takes valuable preparation time. Passions are required for all teachers, including special education and remediation staff.

In summary, the school has an effective hiring process that has allowed them to hire mission-driven staff. However, regular, systematic formal classroom observations are lacking. Additionally, a comprehensive review of resources and supports available to staff and the organization of staff time are areas of concern. Further, as evidenced in the previous indicator, professional development is not based on student performance and is not related to areas of need. Thus, the school does not meet the standard for this indicator.

4.6. Is the school's mission clearly understood by all stakeholders?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>both</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) significant disagreements exist among stakeholders about the school's mission; b) there is a lack of widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.
Meets standard	The school: a) has a mission that is shared by all stakeholders; b) has stakeholders possessing widespread knowledge and commitment to the intentions of the school's mission.

FYCR Rating: Meets Standard.

The mission of TPS is well understood by the entire staff, parents, and students. Students are treated with respect and affection and the staff shows patience and empathy to students. Parents also voice commitment to and understanding of the mission of the school. Thus, the school meets the Mayor's standard for this indicator.

4.7. Is the school climate conducive to student and staff success?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address them: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and/or unproductive.
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas with no evidence of a credible plan to address it: a) The school does not have clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach does not possess high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are disrespectful and/or unsupportive and there are non-existing or unclear processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are unprofessional and /or unproductive.
Meets standard	The school exhibits the following characteristics: a) the school has clearly stated rules that enforce positive behavior; b) the school's discipline approach possesses high expectations for student behavior; c) interactions between faculty and students are respectful and supportive and faculty and students are clear about processes for resolution of conflicts; d) interactions between faculty and administration are professional and constructive.

FYCR Rating: Meets Standard.

Evaluators found that the school utilizes the responsive classroom system to encourage self-monitoring and self-control with the goal of students being able to control their own behavior. Students are treated with respect and are given supports and interventions. During classroom observations, it was very clear to evaluators that students understood the responsive classroom system and the TPS rules. For those students who habitually act out, a part-time mental health counselor is made available. Evaluators did note that the school does not have a fully developed or documented process for those students for whom the responsive classroom model is not sufficient.

The site team found that interactions between students and staff was respectful and supportive. All staff engage in proactive and reactive discipline throughout the school day. Interactions between staff and the administration are frequent and collegial. There is not a formal, written policy or process for staff to express concerns, voice complaints or make inquiries. Additionally, as noted previously, there is no

formal system for teacher evaluations. At the time of the site visit, a formal Employee Handbook had not yet been approved by the Board or disseminated to the staff. Overall, however, the school is demonstrating performance in relation to this indicator that meets the Mayor's standard.

4.8. Is ongoing communication with students and parents clear and helpful?	
Does not meet standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>two or more</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Approaching standard	The school presents significant concerns in <u>one</u> of the following areas: a) there is a lack of active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) school communication is neither timely nor relevant to the parental concerns; c) student academic progress and achievement reports are not clearly reported and/or misunderstood; d) the school's communication methods are not well-designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., not communicating in parents' native languages, communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at inconvenient times for parents).
Meets standard	The school: a) has active and ongoing communication between the school and parents; b) utilizes communications that are both timely and relevant to the parental concerns; c) communicates student academic progress and achievement in reports that are understood by parents; d) the school's communication methods are designed to meet the needs of a diverse set of parents (e.g., communicating in parents' native languages, not communicating only in writing when many parents cannot read, holding meetings at convenient times for parents).

FYCR Rating: Approaching Standard.

Evaluators found that communication of TPS is active and effective. The school uses all traditional and electronic modes of communication to ensure parents are informed and that information is timely and relevant. Parents expressed satisfaction with communication from TPS and noted they feel welcome accessing staff and visiting the school. Parents receive weekly information about students via folders of work sent home. Parents expressed particular satisfaction with parent-teacher conferences, which occur four times a year.

According to the site team, progress reports at TPS contain valuable information in the narrative that is easily understood and valued by parents. However, the team noted that the system of reporting progress based on evidence of workshop-related skills acquired does not convey to parents if their student is meeting state levels for minimum proficiency. While parents receive Acuity results, the results are not contextualized or explained by the school. Parent survey results indicated that the majority of parents believe their student is at or above grade level. In contrast with performance on state tests, it is clear the parents have not been provided meaningful or full progress reports for their students. Thus, the school is approaching the Mayor's standard for this indicator.